

REMARKS

I. Status of Claims

In the aforementioned Office Action, Claims 1 to 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), as being anticipated by Gotoh et al. (US 6,215,236).

Claim 1 is amended for clarity, and to incorporate limitations similar to those of claims 5, 6, and 7. Claims 5 and 6 are canceled. Additionally, claims 1 to 7 are formally amended to delete the reference numerals and to replace "characterized in that" with "wherein". No new matter has been added.

II. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102

Claims 1 to 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Gotoh et al. (US 6,215,236).

Applicant has considered the rejection, but believes that the claims, as amended, are patentable over Gotoh et al. for at least the reasons given below. Applicant believes that these arguments are strengthened by the addition of limitations from the dependent claims into claim 1. Claim 1 has been amended to read:

"A vehicle headlight bulb comprising a lamp envelope, a light source arranged inside the lamp envelope, and a lap base, wherein

the lamp envelope has a sealed end which is essentially constructed to be cuboid formed by ...

... , and the metallic base sleeve has at least one opening in the area of the broad faces of said sealed end of the lamp envelope, wherein

the metallic base sleeve has at least two plates which are molded on to two mutually opposite edges of said opening and rest against one of said broad faces of the sealed end of the lamp envelope, and wherein

said sealed end is equipped with a molded-on pair of guide webs extending in the longitudinal direction of the lamp envelope, respectively, said guide webs serving as a stop for the free ends of said at least two plates."

Amended claim 1 is based on the features of original claims 1, 5, 6 and 7, and is further supported by page 5, lines 21 to 23 and page 6, lines 6 to 18 of the specification.

Gotoh et al. discloses a vehicle headlamp comprising a lamp envelope 2, a light source arranged inside the lamp envelope 2, and a lamp base, wherein the lamp envelope 2 has a sealed end 3 which is essentially constructed to be cuboid formed by two mutually opposite broad faces 3a, 3b and two mutually opposite narrow end faces (not labeled). The lamp base has a ring-shaped metallic sleeve 13 in which said sealed end 3 of the lamp envelope 2 is fixed.

However, Gotoh et al. fails to disclose that the narrow end faces of the sealed end 3 are equipped with matching means for a latching connection with the metallic base sleeve 13. According to Figs. 1 and 2 of Gotoh et al., the matching means 12 for a latching connection with the metallic base sleeve 13 are located on the broad end faces of the sealed end 3, but not on the narrow end faces. Furthermore, Gotoh et al. does not disclose that the metallic base sleeve 13 has at least one opening in the area of the broad faces 3a, 3b of the sealed end of the lamp envelope 2, wherein the metallic base sleeve 13 has at least two plates which are molded on to two mutually opposite edges of said opening and rest against one of said broad faces 3a, 3b of the sealed end 3 of the lamp envelope 2, and wherein said sealed end 3 is equipped with a molded-on pair of guide webs extending in the longitudinal direction of the lamp envelope, respectively, said guide webs serving as a stop for the free ends of said at least two plates, as is claimed in claim 1.

Therefore, since Gotoh et al. fails to disclose all of the features of amended claim 1, the subject matter of amended claim 1 is novel with respect to Gotoh et al. Since

pending claims 2-4 and 7 depend from claim 1, they are novel with respect to Gotoh et al. for at least the same reasons.

It should further be noted that none of the prior art references teaches the opening 30 in the metallic base sleeve 3 and the at least two plates 34, 35 arranged at two opposite edges of said opening 30 and interacting with guide webs 114, 115 on the broad end faces of the sealed end 11 of the lamp envelope in order to provide for a reduced thermal loading of the sealed end 11 during lamp operation and for accurate alignment and guidance of the sealed end in the metallic base sleeve 3. Therefore, the subject matter of claim 1 is not rendered obvious by the state of the art.

III. Notes Regarding Art of Record Not Cited in an Office Action

Applicant further wishes to note for the record that the claims, as amended, are patentable over U.S. Patent 4,634,920, to Rijckaert et al., which was cited in the International Search Report, but not cited in an Office Action from the USPTO. Rijckaert et al. discloses a lamp comprising a lamp envelope 1, a light source 3 arranged inside the lamp envelope 1, and a lamp base, wherein the lamp envelope 1 has a sealed end 2 which is essentially constructed to be cuboid formed by two mutually opposite broad faces and two mutually opposite narrow end faces. The lamp base has a metallic sleeve 5, 7 in which the sealed end 2 of the lamp envelope 1 is fixed. The narrow end faces and the broad end faces of said sealed end 2 as well as the metallic base sleeve, 5, 7 are provided with matching means 6 for a latch connection.

However, Rijckaert et al. fails to disclose that the metallic base sleeve has at least one opening in the area of the broad faces of said sealed end of the lamp envelope, wherein the metallic base sleeve has at least two plates which are molded on to two mutually opposite edges of said opening and rest against one of said broad faces of the sealed end of the lamp envelope and interact with a pair of molded-on guide webs of the sealed end of the lamp envelope. The aforesaid opening (see reference numeral 30) reduces the thermal loading of the sealed end of the lamp envelope during lamp operation

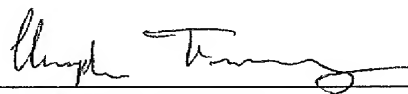
and the at least two plates (see reference numerals 34, 35) interacting with guide webs (see reference numerals 114, 115) to ensure accurate alignment and guidance of the sealed end of the lamp envelope in the metallic base sleeve. These features are present in claim 1, as amended. Accordingly, it is believed that the claims of the present application are novel and non-obvious over Rijckaert et al.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of this application and allowance of the pending claims.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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